

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 AGR-20 SWF-02 FEA-02 INT-08 AID-20

EB-11 CIEP-02 TRSE-00 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 COME-00

ACDA-19 NIC-01 IGA-02 AEC-11 AF-10 DRC-01 IO-14 /257 W

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R 071100Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0116

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMMBASSY ISLAMABAD 6251

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 3236

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN

SUBJECT: INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

SUMMARY: THIS COUNTRY IS IN TROUBLE. THE CRUDE OIL  
CRISIS HIT ON TOP OF A GRAIN PINCH, A SLUGGISH ECONOMY,  
AND RISING DOMESTIC POLITICAL PRESSURES. WE FORESEE AN  
INDIA LESS CONFIDENT, LESS POTENTIALLY INFLUENTIAL, AND  
MORE FRUSTRATED IN THE CONDUCT OF ITS FOREIGN AFFAIRS THAN  
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MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED, SAY, AFTER THE BANGLADESH WAR

AND IN TERMS OF THE RHETORIC OF EARLIER YEARS. A KEY PROBLEM AS INDIA FOCUSES ON THE COMPETITION FOR BARE ESSENTIALS IS ITS INCREASING ISOLATION AND LACK OF LEVERAGE IN THE EMERGING FRAMEWORK OF WORLD AFFAIRS. THE NEW MILITARY POTENTIAL OF PERSIAN GULF COUNTRIES IS SEEN AS A SPECIAL THREAT. WEST ASIA WILL BE A MAJOR PRE-OCCUPATION OF INDIAN POLICY: EAST AND SOUTHEAST WILL NOT. IN SOUTH ASIA, TO WHICH INDIA'S ABILITY TO PROJECT MILITARY POWER WILL BE LIMITED, INDIA WILL BE A CAUSTIOUS SUPPORTER OF THE STATUS QUO, INTERESTED IN THE STABILITY AND INTEGRITY OF ITS NEIGHBORS. IT WILL REMAIN CONCERNED OVER CHINESE INFLUENCE AND ANXIOUS TO RETAIN SOVIET SUPPORT. END SUMMARY.

1. INDIA'S ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES ARE GOING TO BEAR INCREASINGLY ON THE STYLE AND FOCUS OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY. IT SEEMS TO US THAT TO SOME DEGREE THE MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC SUCCESS OF THE BANGLADESH WAR OBSCURED INDIA'S UNDERLYING PROBLEMS AND LIMITATIONS. THE WAR COINCIDED

WITH A PERIOD OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSOLIDATION, INDUSTRIAL PROGRESS, AND AGRICULTURAL SUFFICIENCY--THE PEAK OF THE GREEN REVOLUTION. THE SUCCESSES OF 1971 RAISED EXPECTATIONS BOTH HERE AND ABROAD THAT INDIA WOULD BE A STRONGER REGIONAL POWER AND A MORE INFLUENTIAL VOICE IN WORLD AFFAIRS.

2. INDIA'S CONFIDENCE HAS BEEN SHAKEN AND ITS VISIONS TRIMMED BY RENEWED AWARENESS OF SCARCITY AND ECONOMIC DEBILITY. THE PINCH STARTED AT HOME WITH DROUGHT IN 1972 AND INDUSTRIAL STAGNATION. THEN A CHANGED INTERNATIONAL MARKET HIT INDIA FIRST WITH EXPENSIVE GRAIN AND NEXT WITH AN OIL CRISIS. HERE, AS ELSEWHERE, THE ULTIMATE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ENERGY CRISIS ARE NOT YET APPARENT. INCREASINGLY, HOWEVER, THE PREOCCUPATION OF POLICY IS HOW TO COMPETE FROM A HIGHLY DISADVANTAGED

POSITION FOR THE BARE ESSENTIALS. AS A FUNCTION OF ECONOMIC WEAKNESS, RISING DOMESTIC POLITICAL PRESSURES, AND THE MOMENTUM OF EARLIER HABITS, INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

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WILL CONTINUE FREQUENTLY TO EVIDENCE POSTURING AND ATTITUDINIZING RATHER THAN HARD ANALYTICAL JUDGMENTS.

3. INDIA'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN THE NEW WORLD MARKET UNDERCUT ITS CAPACITY TO BE A RELATIVELY MORE SIGNIFICANT AUTONOMOUS POWER CENTER. ITS ABILITY TO PROJECT MILITARY POWER BEYOND ITS IMMEDIATE REGION IS UNLIKELY TO GROW-- UNLESS IT GOES NUCLEAR, AND WE BELIEVE PREOCCUPATION WITH

ECONOMIC PROBLEMS MARGINALLY REINFORCES THE CURRENT DISINCLINATION TO DO SO. IN THE SHORT RUN, MILITARY PRIORITIES AND ALLOCATIONS WILL REMAIN INTACT AND EXISTING CAPABILITIES WILL NOT BE UNDERCUT. BUT A GOVERNMENT CONCERNED WITH THE FRAGILITY OF DOMESTIC ORDER AND A PRECARIOUS ECONOMY WILL BE ANXIOUS TO AVOID ANY REGIONAL CONFLICT.

4. ONE OF THE MAJOR DIFFICULTIES FOR INDIA IN DEALING WITH ITS PROBLEMS IS ITS ISOLATION IN THE CURRENT INTERNATIONAL ARENA. INDIA IS OUTSIDE THE STREAM OF WESTERN DIALOGUE. IT IS NOT PART OF SOVIET GROUP OR COMMUNIST CONSULTATIONS. ISOLATED BY GEOGRAPHY AND CULTURE, IT IS BEYOND THE FRINGE OF ASIAN-PACIFIC ASSOCIATIONS AND IEP EXCLUDED FROM ARAB-MUSLIM ACTIVITIES. OUTSIZED AND MISTRUSTED, INDIA FINDS WITHIN SOUTH ASIA NEITHER THE SOLIDARITY NOR THE NUMBERS THAT MAKE OTHER REGIONS SIGNIFICANT IN INTERNATIONAL COUNCILS.

5. INDIA THUS TURNS TO LARGER, SOFTER FORUMS SUCH AS THE

NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE AND THE "GROUP OF 77". BUT AMONG THE NON-ALIGNED, INDIA'S VOICE HAS BEEN INCREASINGLY INCIDENTAL TO THE DIRECTION IMPARTED BY THE AFRO-ARAB ACTIVISTS. WHILE INDIA MIGHT HAVE A POTENTIAL NEW ROLE AS SPOKESMAN FOR THE OIL-IMPORTING NON-ALIGNED, IT HAS NOT YET EXERCISED SUCH LEADERSHIP AND APPEARS RELUCTANT TO BECOME A LEADER--AND A TARGET. EXCEPT FOR A FEW OLD FRIENDS LIKE TITO, HEADS OF GOVERNMENT  
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R 071100Z MAR 74  
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0117  
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 NEW DELHI 3236

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, IN  
SUBJECT: INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

6. INDIA WAS FORTUNATE TO HAVE CONSOLIDATED ITS REGIONAL  
PREEMINENCE BEFORE THE CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS. A MAJOR  
FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVE WILL BE TO PRESERVE IT. MORE  
THAN EVER BEFORE, PERHAPS, INDIA HAS REASON TO BE A STATUS  
QUO POWER IN THE REGION. IT WILL REMAIN INVOLVED IN  
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TICKLISH HOUSEKEEPING PROBLEMS WITH ALL OF ITS NEIGHBORS  
THAT CAN EASILY BRUISE SENSIBILITIES AND AROUSE SUS-  
PICIONS. WITH PAKISTAN, INDIA WILL SEEK A GRADUAL  
IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS--ALTHOUGH NEITHER INDIAN  
OFFICIALS NOR WE ARE SANGUINE ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR  
SUBSTANTIAL COOPERATION. WITH BANGLADESH, INDIA HOPES  
TO REMAIN THE MAJOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PARTNER BUT  
IS UNCERTAIN IT WILL. WITH REGARD TO ALL ITS IMMEDIATE  
NEIGHBORS, INDIA WILL BE INTERESTED IN STABILITY AND  
INTEGRITY--AND INTENSELY CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR RELATIONS  
WITH CHINA. WE EXPECT NO MAJOR INITIATIVES UNLESS  
INTERNAL DISRUPTIONS OR CHINESE INFLUENCE POSE AN  
IMMEDIATE THREAT TO INDIA. INDIA DOES NOT EXPECT THE  
LATTER CONTINGENCY TO ARISE BUT IS WARY AND SENSITIVE TO  
THE POTENTIAL. SOME INDIAN POLICY-MAKERS LOOK TOWARD A  
MORE CONSOLIDATED AND CLOSER SOUTH ASIAN ENTENTE WHICH  
WOULD STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL VOICE OF THE  
ENTIRE REGION. THE GROUPING WOULD INCLUDE ALL INDIA'S  
NEIGHBORS WITH INDIA AS THE CENTERPIECE. IT IS A GOAL  
WHICH HAS CONSIDERABLE MERIT IN EVERY RESPECT EXCEPT THE  
ENORMOUS UNLIKELIHOOD THAT THE OTHER SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES  
WOULD BE INTERESTED.

7. INDIA MAY BE THE COUNTRY MOST AFRAID OF THE NEW  
MILITARY POTENTIAL OF PERSIAN GULF COUNTRIES. IN THIS  
RESPECT, THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEW COST OF CRUDE IS A

DOUBLE JOLT. INDIA SEES THE WEAPONS PILING UP AROUND THE GULF AS INHERENTLY DESTABILIZING AND A DIRECT THREAT THROUGH TRANSFER TO PAKISTAN--IN TIME OF WAR, IF NOT BEFORE. THE GULF SHEIKHDOMS DENY THIS, AND INDIA'S RELUCTANCE TO ANTAGONIZE THE ARABS MAKES IT LOATH TO CHALLENGE SUCH ASSURANCES EVEN THOUGH IT DOES NOT BELIEVE THEM. INDIA SEES A NEW AND COMPETITIVE CONCENTRATION OF POWER IN THE PERSIAN GULF REGION--ONE WHERE IT COMPETES AT A DIS-ADVANTAGE WITH PAKISTAN FOR INFLUENCE AND ONE THAT IS BOUND TO TAKE PRIORITY OVER INDIA IN THE CALCULATIONS OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED AND MAJOR POWERS.

8. THERE IS A SENSE OF FRUSTRATION THAT SUPPORT FOR THE ARAB CAUSE HAS NEVER BROUGHT JUST REWARD--AND THAT THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE TO CONTINUING THIS POLICY OR  
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THINGS MIGHT BE EVEN WORSE. INDIA WATCHED WARILY AS PAKISTAN ASSEMBLED THE ARABS ON INDIA'S DOORSTEP AT LAHORE. IT KNOWS IT CAN'T PRESSURE FOR THE ARABS THROUGH THE NON-ALIGNED. INDIA DEPENDS ON WEST ASIA FOR 70 PERCENT OF ITS OIL AND, SPITE ITS COURTING, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE INTEREST IN ANY SPECIAL PRICE DEALS FOR INDIA, ALTHOUGH OPPORTUNITIES FOR WIDER ECONOMIC ASSOCIATIONS ARE DEVELOPING. WEST ASIA WILL BE A MAJOR PREOCCUPATION OF INDIAN POLICY. IT WILL CONTINUE TO CAST ABOUT FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND EASY TERMS WITH GULF COUNTRIES AND EXPRESS CONCERN TO THE WEST--BUT NOT TO THE ARABS--THAT IT NOT SELL THEM SO MANY GUNS.

9. TOWARD SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, INDIAN EFFORTS WILL BE MODEST. ITS INFLUENCE WILL  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, FOREIGN RELATIONS, MILITARY BUILDUP, PETROLEUM  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 07 MAR 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Document Number:** 1974NEWDE03236  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
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**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** NEW DELHI  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t19740361/aaaacenv.tel  
**Line Count:** 254  
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**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
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**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
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**Review Transfer Date:**  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY SUMMARY: THIS COUNTRY IS IN TROUBLE. THE CRUDE OIL  
**TAGS:** PFOR, IN, XF  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005